



Report probes events of September 9, 2002

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY RELEASES REPORT

MONTREAL/January 15, 2003 – “We will ensure that Concordia provides a safe, secure and non-intimidating environment for learning and scholarship,” said Rector Dr. Frederick Lowy while making public a report on the events of September 9th, which resulted in the cancellation of a speech by former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He also outlined a number of measures that are being implemented to reinforce this commitment.

“Our most fundamental commitment here at Concordia is to ensure the safety and the security of our students, our teachers and our support staff as well as visitors to our university,” repeated Lowy. “With a record number of students and student applications, unprecedented levels of physical expansion and capital campaigning, and remarkable success in procuring research funding, Concordia is the University of the future, and the measures we are implementing will make Concordia a leader.”

The Report points out that there had been a series of 16 peaceful demonstrations in Montreal in the year prior to the September 9th event. In addition, the University had received assurances from the Concordia Student Union (CSU) that the demonstration would be peaceful. The Report also demonstrates that there was serious security planning and preparation on the part of the university including extensive co-ordination with various levels of police and security.

“The level of violence that we saw was unprecedented on this issue in Montreal and contrary to all the advance intelligence that municipal and federal police forces were able to provide us,” said Rector Lowy. “We recognize that we should not have held the event at the Hall Building on that day or that we should have hosted it at the Loyola Campus as we had suggested to the event organizers early in the planning process.”

The report is only one piece of a comprehensive effort to address the tensions and the questions that have arisen as a result of the September 9 incident. Dr. Lowy also announced a series of initiatives to ensure the safety and the security of our students, teachers and staff as well as visitors to our university, including:

- Criteria for what constitutes “crossing-the-line” with respect to public exploration and discussion of issues on campus. Appropriate sanctions for contravening the criteria will also be established and publicized.
- What is acceptable with respect to the display of posters, the distribution of publications and the use of university space will be clarified. Dean of Students and Security Department policies and practices will be reviewed in the light of these new criteria and clarifications.

- A monitoring system will be put in place to ensure that the new policies and guidelines are respected.
- The appointment of three new members of the university's administration. Patricia Gabel has been named as Special Advisor to the Rector on Conflict Analysis and Management. As part of her responsibilities, she will be exploring the possibility of setting up a Concordia Centre for International and Cross-Cultural Dispute Resolution. Peter Côté will work with us as an Interim Advisor on Codes of Rights and Responsibilities. Peter has been seconded from his role as Chaplain. Charles Bertrand will take on responsibility as Associate Vice Rector of Student Life and Interim Dean of Students.

In moving forward the University will be implementing all of the operations of the Report including revising its process for assessing risks associated with large public assemblies and student sponsored events, upgrading its emergency plan and the related planning process and setting up a permanent Operations Control Centre. In addition the Hall Building will, for the time being, no longer be used for high-risk events.

- 30 -

Source:

Chris Mota,
Coordinator, Media Relations
Concordia University
tel: (514) 848-4884
cel: (514) 952-5556
fax: (514) 848-2814
e-mail: mota@alcor.concordia.ca